

Message Text

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ACTION IO-03

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INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 2078

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UNICEF US VS VN

SUBJ: UNICEF OPERATIONS IN VIET-NAM

REF: USUN 1753, USUN 2079

1. AMBASSADOR BENNETT HS NOW HAD TWO FURTHER CONVERSATIONS (MAY 31 AND JUNE 5) WITH DIREC GENERAL OF UNICEF LABOUISE TO IMPRESS ON LATTER THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH WE VIEW SEEMING TENDENCY OF UNICEF TO EXPAND ITS OPERATIONS IN PRG AND DRVN AREA AND TO MAKE CRYSTAL CLEAR TO LABOUISE THAT USG IS DETERMINED THAT NO USG FUNDS BE USED IN ANY UNICEF PROGRAMS IN THOSE TWO AREAS. BENNETT HAS STRESSED GUT REACTION IN CONGRESS TO FAILURE OF DRVN AND PRG TO OFFER EVEN MINIMAL COOPERATION IN CONNECTION WITH OUR EFFORTS TO TRACE OUR MIA'S, QUITE ASIDE FROM GROSS VIOLATIONS OF PARIS AGREEMENTS BY THOSE TWO SIGNATORY PARTIES.

2. LABOUISE ON OTHER HAND IS VERY FIRM IN HIS OWN VIEWS THAT UNICEF HAS AN OBLIGATION TO EXTEND AID TO MOTHERS AND CHILDREN IN BOTH DRVN AND PRG. HE ARGUES
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FORCEFULLY THAT HIS ACTIVITIES ARE BASED SOLELY ON HUMANI-

TARIAN CONSIDERATIONS, HAVE NEVER BEEN INVOLVED WITH POLITICAL ISSUES AND ARE NOT NOW SO INVOLVED. HE SAYS HIS VIEW IS SIMPLY THAT CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE PENALIZED BECAUSE THEIR PARENTS ARE FIGHTING WARS. HE LIKENS VIET-NAM SITUATION TO NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR WHEN UNICEF EXTENDED AID TO BIAFRA REGION WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE AND TOLERANCE OF GENERAL GOWON AND HIS ASSOCIATES WHO ALLOWED UNICEF SUPPLIES TO GO THROUGH THEIR LINES TO BIAFRA. HE WANTS IT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT UNICEF'S CURRENT POLICY REPRESENTS HIS OWN PERSONAL DECISION AS TO RIGHT COURSE FOR UNICEF TO FOLLOW IN INDOCHINA RATHER THAN DERIVING FROM HIS ACCEPTANCE OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF STAFF WORKERS.

3. BENNETT RECALLED U.S. REPRESENTATIVE SCELSI'S STATEMENT AT UNICEF BOARD MEETING WITH RESPECT TO U.S. OPPOSITION OF USE OF GENERAL RESOURCES FUND FOR DRVN AND PRG ACTIVITIES AND COMMENTED THAT WE WERE NOT HAPPY WITH UNICEF REPLY AS GIVEN BY SANDBERG. LABOUISSSE REPLIED THAT THE LANGUAGE IN SANDBERG'S STATEMENT THAT UNICEF WOULD AVOID USE OF GENERAL RESOURCES FUND IN DRVN AND PRG AREA "TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE AND PRACTICABLE" WAS HIS OWN LANGUAGE: HE HAD WRITTEN IT HIMSELF. LABOUISSSE ARGUES THAT, ONCE MONEY IS DEPOSITED IN THE GENERAL RESOURCES FUND, IT IS A FUNGIBLE COMMODITY, JUST LIKE WHEAT IN A GRAIN ELEVATOR.

4. LABOUISSSE ARGUES THAT THIS IS A SITUATION IN WHICH U.S. CONSIDERS EVERYONE OUT OF STEP BUT ITSELF. HE IS THE DIRECTOR OF AN INT'L ORGANIZATION. IF HE ACCEPTED US POSITION COMPLETELY WITH RESPECT TO DRVN AND PRG, HE WOULD HAVE ONE MEMBER OF BOARD ON HIS SIDE AND 29 OTHER MEMBERS OF BOARD AGAINST HIM. HE HAS TO TAKE POSITIONS OF OTHER BOARD MEMBERS INTO ACCOUNT AS WELL. BENNETT EXPLAINED THAT US POSITION IS RESTRICTED TO OUR DETERMINATION THAT USG FUNDS SHOULD NOT BE USED IN THESE TWO AREAS. WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES DO WITH THEIR VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS IS FOR THEM TO DIRECT. LABOUISSSE COMMENTED THAT ONLY US AND USSR HAD EVER TRIED TO PLACE RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF GENERAL RESOURCES FUND.

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5. LABOUISSSE DISCOUNTED DEPT'S CONCERN OVER CONGRESSIONAL REACTION AND FOR THAT MATTER SUGGESTED THAT USUN WAS OUT IN FRONT OF DEPARTMENT ON VIET-NAM MATTERS. HE SAYS THAT WHEN HE TALKS TO CONGRESSMEN AND EXPLAINS UNICEF OPERATIONS HE FINDS THEM UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTIVE. DURING JUNE 5 CONVERSATION BENNETT HANDED LABOUISSSE COPY OF HOUSE RES 271 PASSED 273 TO 0 AND SUGGESTED THIS WAS PRETTY GOOD EXAMPLE OF CONGRESSIONAL FEELING AND EVIDENCE THAT

USUN NOT REPEAT NOT EXAGGERATING MATTERS- LABOUISSIE
REMAINED UNCONVINCED AND IN TURN PULLED FROM HIS POCKET
TWO LETTERS FROM MEMBERS OF U.S. NATIONAL COMMITTEE SUPPORTING
UNICEF. BOTH LETTERS DENOUNCED USG'S OPPOSITION
TO HAVING ITS MONEY USED IN NORTH VIET-NAM AND PRG AREAS.
BENNETT WONDERED OPENLY HOW MUCH CLOUT U.S.
UNICEF NATIONAL COMMITTEE HAS WITH CONGRESS AND LABOUISSIE TOOK
POSITION IT HAS A LOT. IT WAS BENNETT'S TURN TO BE RATHER UNCONV-
INCED.

6. IN LINE WITH INSTRUCTIONS BENNETT URGED USE OF IOG
MECHANISM FOR DEALING WITH PRG TO AVOID POSSIBILITY
THAT PRG COULD CLAIM RECOGNITION FROM UNICEF
ACTIVITIES. LABOUISSIE REPLIED THAT IOG IS MORIBUND INSTI-
TUTION AND NO LONGER A SUITABLE VEHICLE FOR UNICEF PURPOSES.

7. IN FURTHER ELABORATION OF LABOUISSIE'S CONCERN OVER ATTITUDE
OF HIS OTHER 29 BOARD MEMBERS, HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT
HE WOULD LOSE EUROPEAN FINANCIAL SUPPORT IF HE FOLLOWED U.S.
WISHES TOO MUCH. HE SAID THAT, FOR INSTANCE,
SWEDEN CONTRIBUTED \$11 MILLION TO THE U.S.'S
\$15 MILLION, A MUCH HIGHER PER CAPITAL CONTRIBUTION. IN FACT,
HE ASSERTED, U.S. NOT REALLY DOING ITS SHARE. BENNETT
COMMENTED THERE WERE VERY FEW COUNTRIES WHO COULD BE CITED
AS DOING AS WELL AS U.S., WHICH REMAINS UNICEF'S LARGEST
CONTRIBUTOR. HE MADE POINT SEVERAL TIMES THAT WHAT CONCERNS US NOW
IS THAT PRESENT UNICEF TREND ON VIET-NAM MAY WELL
IMPERIL PRESENT LEVEL U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO UNICEF, AND RESULT
COULD WELL BE LESS OVERALL CONTRIBTUIONS FROM U.S. IN FUTURE.

8. BENNETT ALSO STRESSED U.S. VIEW THAT UNICEF 1974-75
PLANNING AND ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS TO GVN, PRG AND DRVN AREAS
WAS OUT OF BALANCE IN TERMS OF POPULATION RATIOS. LABOUISSIE
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DEFENDED PLANNING AND INSISTED THAT NO ONE HAD EVER GIVEN
HIM ANY BETTER POPULATION FIGURES THAN THE ONES UNICER
NOW USES. HE SAID HE WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE BETTER FIGURES
SUPPLIED HIM BY USG.

9. BENNETT EMPHASIZED SEVERAL TIMES
THAT DIRECT DEALING BY UNICEF WITH PRG CONSITUTUES OUR
MOST SERIOUS CONCERN. LABOUISSIE RECOGNIZES THIS PROBLEM BUT
DOES NOT SEE ANY OTHER WAY OF OPERATING. HE STRESSED THAT
UNICEF HAS ON SEVERAL OCCCCASIONS PUT IN WRITING THAT
THEIR COMMUNICATIONS AND ACTIVITIES WITH PRG DO NOT CONSTITUTE
RECOGNITION AND CANNOT BE IMPLIED TO MEAN RECOGNITION.

10 USUN 2079 PROVIDES OUR COMMENT ON AID CONTRIBUTION
TO UNICEF IN LIGHT OF LABOUISSIE POSITION.

BENNETT

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